



# VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

## **Virginia's Three Branch Initiative**

*Sustaining Well-Being of Children and  
Families in Foster Care*

Margaret Ross Schultze, Commissioner  
*December 02, 2014*

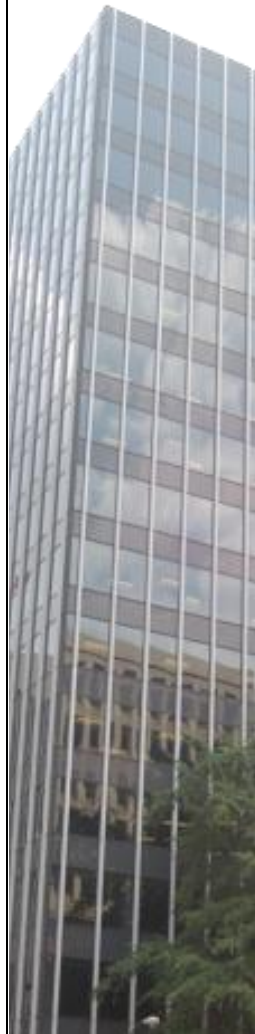
*People helping people triumph over poverty, families abuse and neglect  
to shape strong futures for themselves, their and communities*



# The Virginia Three Branch Initiative

## Purpose

- Measure and improve social and emotional well-being of children in foster care
  - Align work of executive, legislative, judicial branches
  - Consider evidence-based, research informed strategies
  - Enhance existing efforts through cross-system collaboration
  - Leverage resources to fund innovative practices
  - Develop and implement Learning Collaboratives to integrate the work





# Virginia's Three Branch Strategies

## Strategy 1

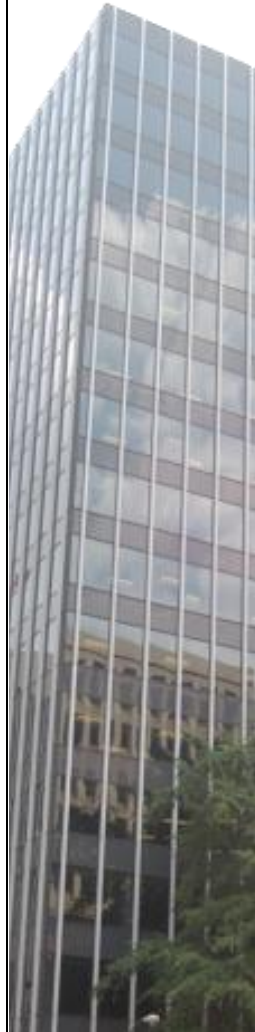
- Manage by data to improve health and behavioral health outcomes

## Strategy 2

- Manage by data to improve educational outcomes

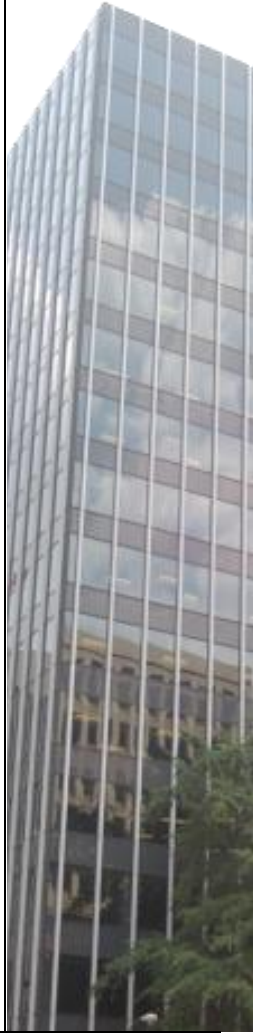
## Strategy 3

- Improve appropriate and effective use of psychotropic medications for children in foster care and implement strategies for consent and monitoring





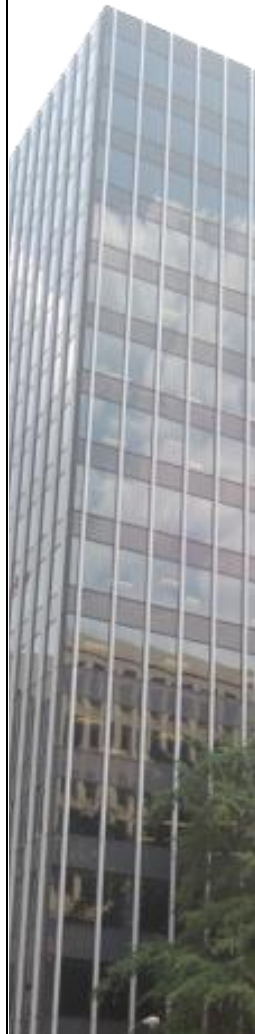
# Accomplishments





# Accomplishments Since July 2013

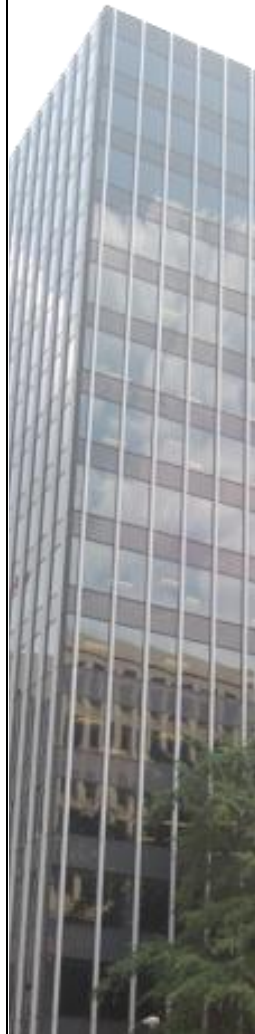
- **Incorporated well-being activities into foster care guidance**
- **Integrated well-being outcomes into the VDSS automated system**
- **Incorporated well-being sections and outcomes into the five-year plan**
  - Includes safety, permanency and well-being sections
- **Over 95% of all children in foster care are now in managed care**
  - Improved access to health care providers
  - Coordination of health care services
  - Case management
  - Targeted services for chronic conditions
  - 24-hour nurse advice line





# Accomplishments Since July 2013

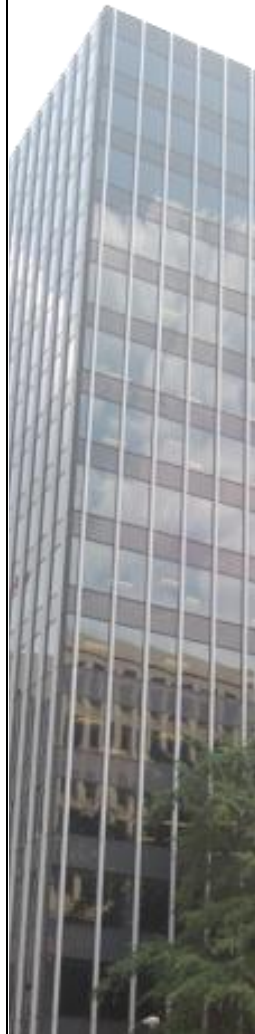
- **Behavioral health administrator**
  - Began managing community behavioral health services through a new Medicaid contract in December 2013
- **Strengthening Child Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS)**
  - Received 186 responses from front line users on how to improve CANS for children, families, workers, & supervisors.
  - Created new child welfare module & enhanced trauma module.
  - Developing CANS reports to assess progress over time:
    - Child report on safety, permanency & well-being
    - Parent/guardian report on permanency & protective factors
  - Adding CANS assessment screen in online data system; will automatically populate top strengths & needs of child & parents from CANS, integrating CANS into online service plan.
  - Enhancing overall user functionality/reporting capabilities for all CANS users.





# Accomplishments Since July 2013

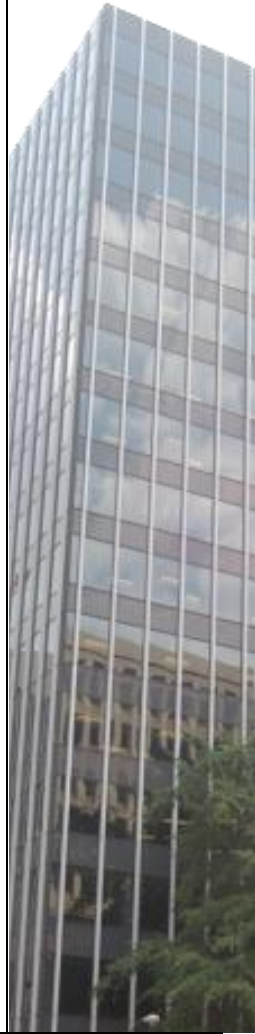
- **Prescription Rate Analysis**
  - Of the top 10 medications prescribed to foster children in Medicaid, the top 2 are psychotropic medications: ADHD and Mood Disorder medications.
  - The top 2 medications prescribed to non-foster children in Medicaid are antihistamines and antibiotics.
- **Sharing Data on Foster Children Between Department of Education and Department of Social Services**
  - FERPA and Uniform Scholars Act have opened opportunities for DOE and VDSS to share data on children
  - Working on identifying a common identifier which may allow for this data sharing to occur
  - DOE will be able to cross-reference foster youth with students to provide some analysis of needs and opportunities







# Moving Forward With Our Work

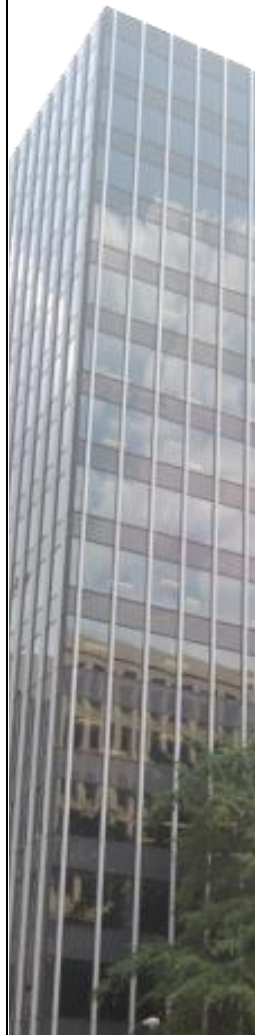


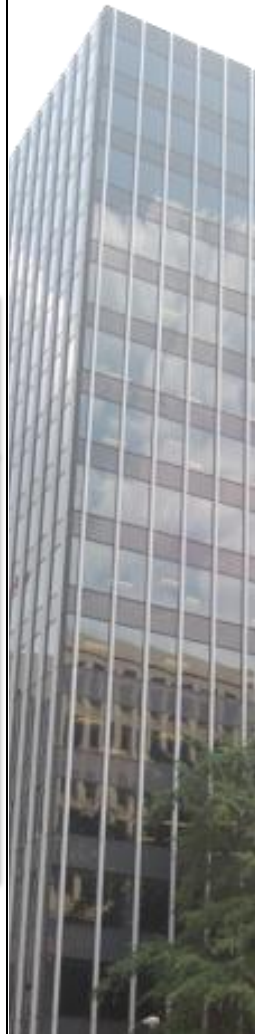




# The Learning Collaborative Series

- **Goal**
  - The goal of the Virginia Learning Collaborative Series (VA LC Series) is to bring together VA LDSS participant teams to learn about and apply innovative practices and strategies to improve their ability to support abused and neglected children and their families.
  - The VA LC Series will focus on Enhancing Service Assessment, Planning, and Delivery as it relates to the Virginia Three Branch Initiative outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being.
  - The LC's are driven by VDSS and supported by Casey Family Programs.





# Learning Collaborative Series

## Learning Collaborative #1

- **Will focus on enhancing family engagement**

## Learning Collaborative #2

- **Will focus on the revised CANS, trauma and psychotropic medication**

## Learning Collaborative #3

- **Will focus on service delivery and evaluation**

# Permanency Values Training and Roundtables

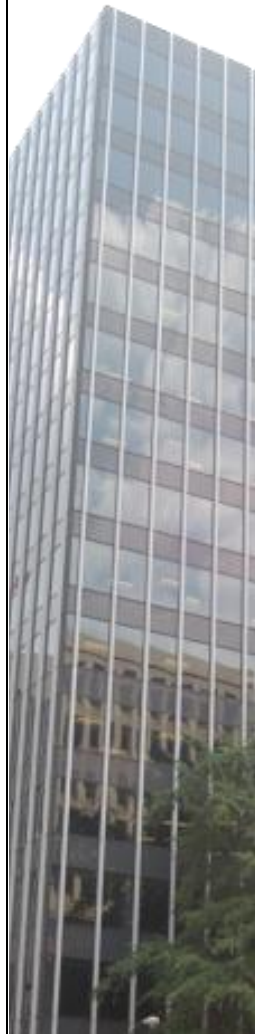


## Permanency Values Training

- Permanency Values Trainings are the pre-requisite training for Permanency Round Table skills training. In the training participants learn the values associated with permanency and the working definition of permanency.

## Permanency Round Tables

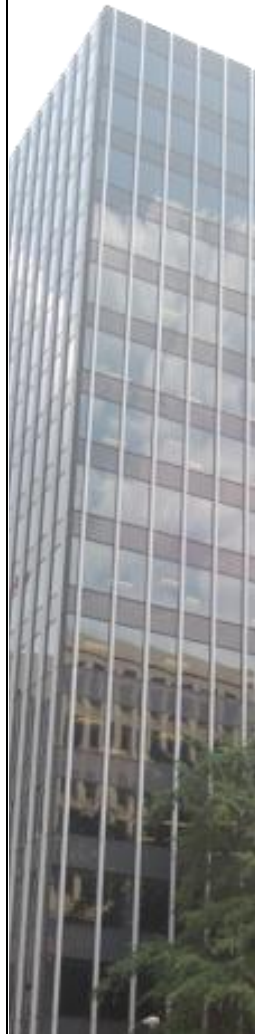
- General Objectives
  - To stimulate thinking about connections to permanency for youth in foster care
  - To develop a permanency plan for specific youth that can be realistically implemented. To establish life long connections and/or supports for these youth.





# Permanency Round Tables

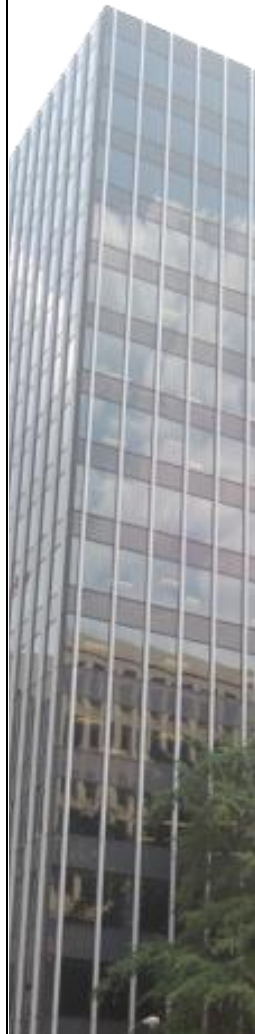
- Through the CFSR, the Division identified the need to focus on permanency for youth in foster care, especially our longest waiting youth.
- In 2013, Casey Family Programs sponsored Permanency Values and Skills Training for VDSS staff .
- In 2014, VDSS staff held Permanency Values Training in each of the five VDSS regions for LDSS staff, private providers, court staff, resource families and community partners.
- In 2015, VDSS staff will work with LDSS agencies to plan and implement Skills Training and Permanency Round Tables in each region.





## Three Branch in 2015

- Funding for the original Three Branch grant ends at the end of 2014.
- Casey Family Programs has agreed to provide additional funds to continue the Three Branch work through the end of 2015.
- At the next meeting on December 16<sup>th</sup>, the leadership team will discuss what additional areas of foster youth well-being should be addressed through the cross-agency collaboration of this initiative.
- There are opportunities to partner with the Children's Cabinet and Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success to tackle issues facing foster children.
- One such partnership is with DJJ in tackling the trauma and unique issues our “dually involved” youth face.





# Conclusions

**Ambitious, flexible & evolving work plan** to meet federal requirements, fundamentally improve practice, and take advantage of opportunities.

**Successful & effective partnership**

- State driven approach
- Individually tailored technical assistance
- High quality experts and consultations
- Networking with other states
- Videoconferencing works well
- Casey Family Programs has been insightful, timely, flexible, and strategic in supporting and helping us move forward
- On site visits by national partners beneficial

